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Department
for Education

Guidance

Statutory policies for schools and academy trusts

Updated 1 November 2019

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All changes made to the page reflect previously announced requirements on schools, there are no new requirements or policies announced in this update.

1. Introduction

and must meet the requirements that apply to their school or trust:

- school leaders in all schools
- governing bodies in local-authority-maintained schools
- proprietors of academies and independent schools

Schools and trusts are not always required to hold a specific policy for each requirement. It is possible to meet several requirements collectively, unless stated otherwise.

The drafting of school policies can be delegated to any member of school staff, unless stated otherwise.

This document covers how often each policy must be reviewed. Where it doesn't, we strongly advise you to review the policy annually. Where there's a change in the law or circumstances, you will need to revise your policies or documentation accordingly.

It also shows the level of approval required. Not all policies need to be signed off by the full governing body.

Throughout this guidance we use the term 'governing body' to represent both governing boards and trust boards.

There are instances where statutory guidance states that policies and procedures should be in place, although this is not the same as a legal requirement. Each piece of linked guidance which is not statutory makes clear the nature of the requirement.

Where possible, model policies have been included within the linked guidance. Organisations, such as your local authority, can provide free support and model policies which we suggest you consider.

2. Who this guidance is for

Each section sets out who the guidance applies to. Academies and free schools have greater freedoms than local-authority-maintained schools in relation to school policies and other documents.

We have outlined arrangements applying to these schools in legislation or in their [funding agreements](#). This may vary between individual academies and free schools.

3. List of policies

The table below outlines for local-authority-maintained schools and academies:

- each policy
- who it applies to
- the review period
- approval level

Policy	Local-authority-	Academies	Review cycle	Approval level
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	maintained schools			
Admission arrangements	Yes	Yes	Annually	Governing body, local authority, academy trust
Charging and remissions	Yes	Yes	Recommended annually	Governing body, individual governor or headteacher
Data protection	Yes	Yes	Recommended annually	Governing body
Protection of biometric information of children in schools and colleges	Yes	Yes	Recommended annually	Governing body
Register of pupils' admission to school and attendance	Yes	Yes	Live document	Governing body, individual governor or headteacher
School information published on a website	Yes	Yes	Live document	Governing body, individual governor or headteacher
School complaints	Yes	No	Recommended annually	Governing body, individual governor or headteacher
Capability of staff	Yes	Yes	Recommended annually	Governing body or an individual governor
Newly qualified teachers (NQTs)	Yes	Yes	Recommended annually	Governing body
Staff discipline, conduct and grievance (procedures for addressing)	Yes	Yes	Recommended annually	For local-authority-maintained schools: governing body. For academies: governing body, individual governor or headteacher
Single central record of recruitment and vetting checks	Yes	Yes	Live document	Governing body, individual governor or headteacher
Statement of procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff	Yes	Yes	Recommended annually	Governing body
Teachers' pay	Yes	No	Annually	Governing body or local authorities
Accessibility plan	Yes	Yes	Every 3 years	Governing body
Child protection policy and procedures	Yes	Yes	Annually	Governing body or proprietor
Children with health needs who cannot attend school	Yes	Yes	Recommended annually	Governing body
Designated teacher for looked-after and previously	Yes	Yes	Recommended annually	Governing body

looked-after children

Early years foundation stage (EYFS)	Yes	Yes	Varies	Governing body can delegate
Special educational needs and disability	Yes	Yes	Annually	Governing body or proprietor
Supporting pupils with medical conditions	Yes	Yes	Recommended annually	Governing body
Sex and relationships education	Yes	No	Recommended annually	Governing body, individual governor or headteacher
Behaviour in schools	Yes	Yes	Recommended annually	Headteacher can delegate
Behaviour principles written statement	Yes	No	Recommended annually	Governing body
School exclusion	Yes	Yes	Recommended annually	Governing body, individual governor or headteacher
Health and safety	Yes	Yes	Annually	Employer
First aid in schools	Yes	Yes	Recommended annually	Employer
Premises management documents	Yes	Yes	Recommended annually	Governing body, individual governor or headteacher
Equality information and objectives (public sector equality duty) statement for publication	Yes	Yes	Every 4 years	Governing body, individual governor or headteacher
Governors' allowances (schemes for paying)	Yes	No	Recommended annually	Governing body, individual governor or headteacher
Instrument of government	Yes	No	Recommended annually	Governing body
Register of business interests of headteachers and governors	Yes	Yes	Recommended annually	Governing body can delegate approval subject to the local authority scheme
Careers guidance: details of your careers programme and a provider access statement	Yes	Yes	Recommended annually	Governing body or headteacher

4. Admission arrangements

These apply to:

- local-authority-maintained schools, including maintained special schools
- academies
- free schools, including university technical colleges and studio schools
- voluntary-aided schools and foundation schools directly
- community and voluntary-controlled schools if the local authority formally delegates the responsibility

Arrangements must be determined annually. You must consult on any changes, and where no changes are made, consultation is required at least every 7 years.

The full governing body or a committee of the governing body must approve, where the school is its own admissions authority.

Statutory guidance to follow when carrying out duties relating to school admissions and school admission appeals:

- [School admissions code](#)
- [School admission appeals code](#)

Non-statutory guidance about school admissions for children born in the summer:

- [Summer born children school admissions](#)

5. Administration and data

5.1 Charging and remissions

Applies to:

- local-authority-maintained schools, including maintained special schools and maintained nursery schools
- academies
- free schools, including university technical colleges and studio schools

This applies directly to academies and free schools via their funding agreements.

The governing body is free to decide how often you review. We advise that governing bodies review this requirement annually.

The governing body can delegate approval to a committee of the governing body, an individual governor or the headteacher.

Non-statutory guidance on how to set out policies on charging for school activities and visits:

- [Charging for school activities](#)

5.2 Data protection

Applies to:

- local-authority-maintained schools, including maintained special schools
- academies
- free schools, including university technical colleges and studio schools
- independent schools, not state-funded
- sixth-form colleges
- further education colleges with 16 to 19 provision
- pupil referral units (PRUs)
- non-maintained special schools

Under the Data Protection (Charges and Information) Regulations 2018, schools must register with the [information commissioner's office](#).

You must adhere to GDPR requirements. The [DfE teaching blog](#) includes articles with suggestions on how to ensure you are compliant.

We advise that governing bodies review this requirement annually. Registration is annual.

Suggested privacy notices to issue to staff, parents and pupils about the collection of data:

- [Data protection and privacy notices](#)

5.3 Protection of biometric information of children in schools and colleges

This applies to:

- local-authority-maintained schools, including maintained special schools
- academies including 16 to 19 academies
- free schools, including university technical colleges and studio schools
- independent schools, not state-funded
- sixth-form colleges
- pupil referral units (PRUs)
- non-maintained special schools
- further education institutions

We advise that governing bodies review this requirement annually.

Non-statutory guidance on the [protection of biometric information of children in schools and colleges](#).

5.4 Register of pupils' admission to school and attendance

Applies to:

- local-authority-maintained schools, including maintained special schools and nursery schools
- academies
- free schools, including university technical colleges and studio schools
- independent schools, not state-funded
- pupil referral units (PRUs)
- non-maintained special schools

The register of admission must be a live document. The governing body is free to delegate approval to a committee of the governing body, an individual governor or the headteacher. The register itself can be kept by appropriate school staff.

The attendance register must be a live document. The governing body of a school can delegate the keeping of the register to the headteacher. The register must be kept and updated daily by appropriate school staff.

Non-statutory guidance on using pupil registers and attendance codes, as well as setting school hours and term dates:

- [School attendance](#)

5.5 School information published on a website

Applies to:

- local-authority-maintained schools, including maintained special schools
- academies
- free schools, including university technical colleges and studio schools

This is a live document that must be updated as soon as possible after a change and at least annually.

The governing body is free to delegate approval to a committee of the governing body, an individual governor or the headteacher.

Details of the information to include on websites:

- [What local-authority-maintained schools must publish online](#)
- [What academies, free schools and colleges should publish online](#)

5.6 School complaints

Applies to local-authority-maintained schools, including maintained special schools.

We strongly advise academies to consider following the guidance.

Academies should have a written complaints procedure, which is available on request to parents. We recommend that academies publish this online and make it available to anyone who requests it.

The governing body or the proprietor is free to decide how often you review. We advise that governing bodies review this requirement annually.

The governing body or the proprietor can delegate approval to a committee of the governing body, an individual governor or the headteacher.

procedures:

- [School complaints procedures](#)

Non-statutory guidance for academies on how create a complaints procedure:

- [Setting up an academies complaints procedure](#)

6. Staffing and human resources

6.1 Capability of staff

Applies to:

- local-authority-maintained schools, including maintained special schools
- academies
- pupil referral units (PRUs)
- independent schools, not state-funded
- free schools

We advise that governing bodies review this requirement annually.

The governing body of a local-authority-maintained school or management committee can delegate approval to a committee of the governing body or an individual governor.

Non-statutory guidance for schools on appraisal and dismissal policies:

- [Teacher appraisal and capability model policy](#)

Non-statutory guidance for school staffing regulation for all staff of local-authority-maintained schools:

- [Staffing and employment: advice for schools](#)

6.2 Newly qualified teachers (NQTs)

Applies to:

- local-authority-maintained schools including maintained special schools and nursery schools
- academies
- free schools, including university technical colleges and studio schools
- pupil referral units (PRU)
- independent schools, not state-funded
- sixth-form colleges
- further education institutions

We advise that governing bodies review this requirement annually.

The governing body must ensure that the school is compliant.

Statutory guidance on inductions for newly qualified teachers (NQTs):

- [Induction for newly qualified teachers \(NQTs\)](#)

6.3 Staff discipline, conduct and grievance (procedures for addressing)

Applies to:

- local-authority-maintained schools, including maintained special schools
- academies
- free schools, including university technical colleges and studio schools
- independent schools, not state-funded
- sixth-form colleges
- pupil referral units (PRUs)
- non-maintained special schools

For local-authority-maintained schools, the governing body is free to decide how often you review. We advise that governing bodies review this requirement annually. All other establishments may want to include this policy but should refer to general employment law.

For local-authority-maintained schools the governing body must not delegate responsibility for establishing their staff discipline, conduct or grievance procedures.

For academies the governing body is free to delegate approval to a committee of

the governing body, an individual governor or the headteacher.

Non-statutory guidance for managing staff and employment issues:

- [Staffing and employment advice for schools](#)

6.4 Single central record of recruitment and vetting checks

Applies to:

- local-authority-maintained schools, including maintained special schools and nursery schools
- academies
- free schools, including university technical colleges and studio schools
- independent schools, not state-funded
- sixth-form colleges
- pupil referral units (PRU)
- non-maintained special schools

This applies to all schools, colleges and further education institutions where early years education is delivered. They are linked to safeguarding policies.

This is a live document covering staff currently appointed. Schools should also maintain a single central record of pre-employment checks.

The governing body of a local-authority-maintained school or a management committee of a PRU is generally free to delegate approval to:

- the headteacher
- one or more governors/members
- a committee of the governing body/management committee
- or one or more governors/members acting with the headteacher

Statutory guidance on employing staff who have been disqualified from providing childcare:

- [Keeping children safe in education](#)
- [Disqualification under the childcare act 2006](#)

6.5 Statement of procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff

Applies to:

- local-authority-maintained schools, including maintained special schools
- academies
- free schools, including university technical colleges and studio schools
- independent schools, not state-funded
- sixth-form colleges
- further education colleges with 16 to 19 provision
- pupil referral units (PRUs)
- non-maintained special schools

The governing body is free to decide how often you review. We advise that governing bodies review this requirement annually.

The governing body can delegate approval.

Statutory guidance on safeguarding children and safer recruitment:

- [Disqualification under the childcare act 2006](#)
- [Keeping children safe in education](#)

6.6 Teachers' pay

Applies to:

- local-authority-maintained schools, including maintained special schools

Academies and free schools have greater freedoms than maintained schools.

Schools must follow the statutory guidance when making pay award decisions and creating pay policies.

This must be reviewed annually.

The governing body or local authority will need to approve.

Statutory guidance on pay and conditions for teachers:

- [Teachers' pay and conditions](#)

7. Pupil wellbeing and safeguarding

7.1 Accessibility plan

Applies to:

- local-authority-maintained schools, including maintained special schools
- academies
- free schools, including university technical colleges and studio schools
- independent schools, not state-funded
- sixth-form colleges
- pupil referral units (PRUs)
- non-maintained special schools

Review every 3 years.

The governing body is free to delegate approval to a committee of the governing body, an individual governor or the headteacher.

Non-statutory guidance on accessibility plans to help schools fulfil their duties under the act is included in our:

- [Equality act 2010 advice for schools](#)

7.2 Child protection policy and procedures

Applies to:

- local-authority-maintained schools, including maintained special schools
- academies
- free schools, including university technical colleges and studio schools
- independent schools, not state-funded
- sixth-form colleges

- pupil referral units (PRU)
- non-maintained special schools

We advise that governing bodies review and update annually as a minimum.

The governing body or proprietor should approve.

The policy should also be available publicly on the school or college website or elsewhere.

Statutory guidance on safeguarding children and safer recruitment:

- [Keeping children safe in education](#)

7.3 Children with health needs who cannot attend school

Applies to:

- local-authority-maintained schools, including maintained special schools
- academies
- free schools, including university technical colleges and studio schools
- independent schools, not state-funded
- where a child is not on the roll of a school

We advise that governing bodies review this requirement annually.

The governing body must approve.

Statutory guidance on education for children with health needs who cannot attend school:

- [Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school](#)

7.4 Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children

Applies to:

- local-authority-maintained schools, including maintained special schools
- academies

We advise that governing bodies review this requirement annually.

The governing body must approve.

Statutory guidance on designated teachers for looked-after and previously looked-after children:

- [Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children](#)

7.5 Early years foundation stage (EYFS)

Applies to:

- local-authority-maintained schools, including maintained special schools and maintained nursery schools
- academies
- free schools, including university technical colleges and studio schools
- independent schools, not state-funded
- pupil referral units (PRUs)
- non-maintained special schools

Those delivering the EYFS are required to have policies and procedures on a range of issues covering safeguarding and welfare.

Schools are not required to have separate policies to cover EYFS requirements where they are already met through an existing policy.

An EYFS profile assessment is required for each child during the academic year they reach the age of 5 (for most children this is the reception year in primary school).

Nursery settings catering for children under 3 must complete a summary check when a child is aged 2.

Review frequency varies, details are in the statutory guidance.

Statutory guidance on what policies you are required to have on a range of issues covering safeguarding and welfare:

The governing body can determine approval.

7.6 Special educational needs and disability

Applies to:

- local-authority-maintained schools, including maintained special schools
- academies
- free schools, including university technical colleges and studio schools

You should update the SEN information report annually and any changes to the information occurring during the year should be updated as soon as possible.

The full governing body or proprietor must approve.

Statutory guidance on the special educational needs and disability (SEND) system for children and young people:

- [the 0 to 25 special educational needs and disability code of practice](#)

7.7 Supporting pupils with medical conditions

Applies to:

- local-authority-maintained schools, including maintained special schools
- academies, excluding 16 to 19 academies
- pupil referral units (PRUs)

The governing body, proprietor and management committee is free to decide how often you review. However it should be regularly reviewed and readily accessible to parents and school staff.

The governing body can approve for local-authority-maintained schools, proprietors of academies, and management committees for PRUs.

Statutory guidance about the support that pupils with medical conditions

should receive:

- [Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions](#)

8. Sex and relationship education

Applies to:

- local-authority-maintained schools, including maintained special schools
- pupil referral units (PRU)

The governing body is free to decide how often you review. We advise that governing bodies review this requirement annually.

The governing body is also free to delegate approval to a committee of the governing body, an individual governor or the headteacher.

Statutory guidance on relationship and sex education:

- [Relationship and sex education](#)

New statutory guidance will be published in September 2020 on:

- relationships education
- relationships and sex education
- health education

It will apply to all state funded schools including academies and free schools.

9. Behaviour

9.1 Behaviour in schools

Applies to:

- local-authority-maintained schools, including maintained special schools
- academies

- free schools, including university technical colleges and studio schools
- pupil referral units (PRUs)
- non-maintained special schools

The headteacher is free to decide how often you review. We advise that governing bodies review this requirement annually.

The headteacher is free to delegate approval.

Statutory guidance on school behaviour and attendance:

- [Behaviour and discipline in schools: guide for governing bodies](#)

9.2 Behaviour principles written statement

Applies to:

- local-authority-maintained schools, including maintained special schools
- pupil referral units (PRUs)
- non-maintained special schools

Academies and free schools have greater freedoms than maintained schools. Although this requirement is not mandatory for academies we strongly advise academies to consider following the guidance.

The governing body is free to decide how often you review. We advise that governing bodies review this requirement annually.

The full governing body or a committee of the governing body must approve.

Statutory guidance on creating a behaviour policy:

- [Behaviour and discipline in schools: guide for governing bodies](#)

Independent schools must ensure:

- a written behaviour policy is drawn up that sets out the sanctions to be adopted in the event of pupil misbehavior
- the policy is implemented effectively
- a record is kept of the sanctions imposed upon pupils for serious misbehaviour

9.3 School exclusion

Applies to:

- local-authority-maintained schools, including maintained special schools
- academies
- free schools
- pupil referral units (PRU)

We advise that governing bodies review this requirement annually.

The governing body can delegate approval to a committee of the governing body, an individual governor or the headteacher.

Statutory guidance on the exclusion of pupils:

- [School exclusion](#)

10. Facilities

10.1 Health and safety

Applies to:

- local-authority-maintained schools, including maintained special schools
- academies
- free schools, including university technical colleges and studio schools
- independent schools, not state-funded
- pupil referral units (PRU)
- local authorities on behalf of community and voluntary-controlled schools

The governing body, proprietor or local authority is free to decide how often you review. We advise that governing bodies review this requirement annually.

The employer can determine how to implement and approve.

Schools are not required to have a specific health and safety policy, but we provide non-statutory advice you can follow.

Non-statutory advice on health and safety covering activities:

- [Health and safety advice for schools](#)

10.2 First aid in schools

Applies to:

- local-authority-maintained schools, including maintained special schools
- academies
- free schools, including university technical colleges and studio schools
- independent schools, not state-funded
- sixth-form colleges
- pupil referral units (PRUs)
- non-maintained special schools

Schools are not required to have a specific first aid policy, but we provide non-statutory advice you can follow.

We advise that governing bodies review this requirement annually.

Non-statutory guidance on first aid provision:

- [First aid in schools](#)

10.3 Premises management documents

Applies to:

- local-authority-maintained schools, including maintained special schools
- academies
- free schools, including university technical colleges and studio schools
- independent schools, not state-funded
- sixth-form colleges
- pupil referral units (PRUs)
- non-maintained special schools

There are many aspects of school premises that require safe management and

maintenance such as asbestos, fire safety and statutory testing. Those with duties for maintaining school buildings should make sure that the policies, procedures and the condition of the estate are compliant with appropriate legislation, including health and safety.

Independent schools, academies and free schools have sole responsibility.

For local-authority-maintained schools, both local authorities and schools have responsibilities for the repair and maintenance of premises.

We advise that governing bodies review this requirement annually.

The governing body can delegate approval to a committee of the governing body, an individual governor or the headteacher.

Non-statutory advice on the policies, processes and documents that schools, academies and multi-academy trusts should consider when managing their estates:

- [Good estate management for schools](#)

Additional non-statutory advice:

- [Asbestos management in schools](#)

Non-statutory guidance:

[Fire safety risk assessment for educational premises.](#)

Non-statutory guidance to help schools and local authorities understand their obligations in relation to the School Premises Regulations 2012:

- [Standards for school premises](#)

Non-statutory guidance to help schools manage emergencies and risks:

- [Emergency and risk management](#)

11. Governance

11.1 Equality information and objectives (public sector equality duty) statement for publication

Applies to:

- local-authority-maintained schools, including maintained special schools
- academies
- free schools, including university technical colleges and studio schools
- pupil referral units (PRU)
- local authorities on behalf of PRUs

Under specific duties, governing bodies, local authorities and proprietors are required to draw up and publish equality objectives every 4 years and annually publish information. They need to demonstrate how they are meeting the aims of the general public sector equality duty.

The governing body can delegate approval to a committee of the governing body, an individual governor or the headteacher.

11.2 Governors' allowances (schemes for paying)

Applies to:

- local-authority-maintained schools, including maintained special schools

Academies and free schools have greater freedoms than maintained schools. Although this requirement is not mandatory for academies we strongly advise academies to consider following the guidance.

For local-authority-maintained schools with a delegated budget the governing body is free to decide how often you review schemes for paying governors' allowances. We advise that governing bodies review this requirement annually.

The governing body can delegate approval to a committee of the governing body, an individual governor or the headteacher.

Where schools do not have a delegated budget, the local authority may pay allowances and expenses at a rate determined by them.

11.3 Instrument of government

Applies to:

- local-authority-maintained schools, including maintained special schools

The governing body is free to decide how often you review. We advise that governing bodies review this requirement annually.

Non-statutory guidance on the roles and duties of governing bodies, and advice on the skills, knowledge and behaviours they need to be effective:

- [Governance handbook](#)

Statutory guidance setting out the arrangements for the constitution of governing bodies of all local-authority-maintained schools:

- [Constitution of governing bodies of maintained schools](#)

11.4 Register of business interests of headteachers and governors

Applies to:

- local-authority-maintained schools, including maintained special schools
- academies

The governing body is free to decide how often you review. We advise that governing bodies review this requirement annually.

The governing body can delegate approval subject to the local authority scheme.

Statutory guidance for local authorities on producing and amending school financing schemes:

- [Schemes for financing schools](#)

Statutory guidance setting out the arrangements for the constitution of governing bodies of all local authority local-authority-maintained schools:

- [Constitution of governing bodies of local-authority-maintained schools](#)

12. Careers guidance

Applies to:

- local-authority-maintained schools
- academies

- free schools, including university technical colleges and studio schools
- voluntary-aided schools and foundation schools
- community and voluntary-controlled schools
- pupil referral units (PRUs)

You must publish details of your careers programme for young people and their parents. You must also publish a statement setting out your arrangements for provider access.

We advise that governing bodies review these annually.

Statutory guidance for schools on providing careers guidance:

- [Careers guidance and access for education and training providers](#)

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